IN THE CLAIMS

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1 and 12-17 and ADD new claims 18 and 19 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) An advertising method for distributing advertisements to user terminals on a network from an awareness device for managing user status, the advertising method comprising:

storing as a user status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser, the symbol being originally provided by the advertiser and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself;

accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation; and

distributing to a user terminal used by a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status via the network.

2. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

the symbol use request is accepted on a Web Page provided by the advertiser; and

the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for a user requesting use of the symbol on the Web Page.

3. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

a request to use the symbol is accepted from the secondary user receiving the symbol as the primary user's status; and

the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for the secondary user.

4. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

a request to use the symbol is accepted from the secondary user receiving the symbol as the primary user's status, and the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for the secondary user; and

the secondary user or advertiser is requested to pay a charge for using the symbol.

5. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

the symbol representing the advertiser is stored with privileges the advertiser provides; and

when the request by the primary user to use the symbol as a self-status designation is accepted, the primary user is notified of privileges provided by the advertiser the designated symbol represents.

6. (Previously Presented) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

user-status symbol designation is accepted through a Web Page for the advertiser the Web Page providing privileges for users;

setting the symbol as user status is reported from the user terminal or the advertiser, to the awareness device; and

the symbol is set by the awareness device as the user status.

7. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

the advertiser's symbol is stored with a referral count for the symbol during predetermined period; and

the advertiser is billed according to the referral count during the predetermined period.

8. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

incentives are offered to the primary user according to a count of referrals by the secondary user to the symbol set as the primary user's status, or according to a copy count of times the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for the secondary user; and

coupons from advertisers are offered to users according to the referral count or to the copy count.

9. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

purchasing information representing user purchase of the advertiser's items or services when purchased at an outlet is sent to an outlet terminal;

a predetermined process based on the purchasing information is performed at the outlet wherein the advertiser symbol and the user are reported from the user terminal or the outlet terminal to the awareness device; and

on receiving the report the awareness device sets as the reported user's status the symbol representing the reported advertiser.

10. (Previously Presented) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

content operable or available for output on the user terminals is stored with a symbol representing the content in at least one of the terminals on the network;

when a user selects any of the contents, the symbol representing the content and the user is reported to the awareness server from the at least one network terminal; and

the awareness device sets as the user's status the symbol representing the content.

11. (Original) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

by storing the advertiser's symbol in a device installed in an outlet for the advertiser and wirelessly sending the symbol to a user terminal, the symbol of the advertiser is set as the user status when the user visits the outlet.

12. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable recording medium on which is recorded a program for an advertising method for distributing advertisements to user terminals on a network, the program being employed by an awareness device for managing user status, the program causing a computer to perform at least:

storing as a user ~~status-selling~~status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser, the symbol being originally provided by the advertiser and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself;

accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation; and

distributing to a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status.

13. (Currently Amended) An awareness server for managing user status, the awareness server communicatively connected to at least one user terminal via a network and comprising:

storing means storing as a user status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser, the symbol being originally provided by the advertiser and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself;

accepting means accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation; and

distributing means distributing to the at least one user terminal used by a secondary user

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the symbol representing the primary user's status via the network.

14. (Currently Amended) A user status setting method used for an awareness service accepting information on user status via a network and storing the information, accepting request by a user via a network and sending information on another user, and enabling a requested user to be referred to by request, comprising:

previously accepting a symbol <u>originally provided by an advertiser</u> ~~including advertisement information from an advertiser~~ as information for status setting of a user<u>, the symbol including advertisement information and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself</u>;

selectably presenting a<u>the</u> symbol ~~including advertisement information~~ provided by the above-mentioned advertiser as information on a primary ~~user~~<u>user's</u> status ~~of a primary user~~;

setting a<u>the</u> symbol ~~including advertisement information~~ selected by the primary ~~user~~<u>user's</u> as the primary user status; and

presenting the symbol ~~including advertisement information~~ as the primary user's status information on a user terminal when a status reference request of the primary user from a secondary user is accepted.

15. (Currently Amended) An advertising method using awareness services accepting and storing information on user status via a network, accepting a request of a user and sending information on another user via a network, and enabling a required user status to be referred to, the method comprising:

accepting at a first time a symbol <u>originally provided by an advertiser</u> ~~including advertisement information~~ as information for user status setting ~~from an advertiser~~<u>of a user, the symbol including advertisement information and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself</u>;

selecting the stored symbol and setting the stored symbol as information of user status by the user; and

presenting the symbol ~~including the advertisement information~~ on a user terminal ~~to~~<u>used by</u> a primary user requesting reference as status information set <u>for</u> a secondary user when a reference request of the secondary user's status made by the primary user is accepted.

16. (Currently Amended) An advertising method using awareness services accepting and storing information on user status via a network, accepting a request of a user and sending

information on another user via a network, and enabling a required user status to be referred to, the method comprising:

accepting at a first time a symbol <u>originally by an advertiser</u> ~~including advertisement information~~ and storing the symbol ~~including the advertisement information~~ as an alternative of ~~user~~<u>a primary user's</u> status setting ~~from an advertiser~~<u>, the symbol including advertisement information and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself</u>;

selecting the symbol ~~including the advertisement information provided by the advertiser~~<u>from alternatives of the primary user's status setting</u> and setting the symbol ~~including the advertisement information~~ as information on status of ~~a~~<u>the</u> primary user by the primary user;

presenting <u>the symbol as status information set for the primary user</u> on a user terminal <u>used by a secondary user</u>, when a reference request <u>from the secondary user for</u> ~~of~~ the primary ~~user~~<u>user's status</u> is accepted ~~from a secondary user, the symbol including the advertisement information as status information set for the primary user~~; and

setting by the secondary user the presented symbol ~~including the advertisement information~~ as a self status.

17. (Currently Amended) An awareness device for managing user status and distributing advertisements, the awareness device communicatively connected to at least one user terminal on a network and comprising:

a storage unit which stores a user status corresponding to a primary user and a destination list including information regarding a destination to which the user status is distributed;

an update unit which receives an update of the user status via the net work and updates the stored user status, the updated stored user status including a symbol representing an advertiser based on the received update<u>, the symbol being originally provided by the advertiser and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself</u>; and

a notification unit which notifies the destination when the stored user status is updated,

wherein the at least one user terminal obtains the stored user status from the awareness device when the destination includes a secondary user of the at least one user terminal.

18. (New) An advertising method for distributing advertisements to user terminals on a network from an awareness device for managing user status, the advertising method comprising:

storing as a user status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser, the symbol being originally provided by the advertiser and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself;

accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation;

distributing to a user terminal used by a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status via the network; and

presenting the symbol on a user terminal used by the secondary user as the primary user's status information to remind the secondary user of the advertiser, its items or its services.

19. (New) An advertising method for distributing advertisements to user terminals on a network from an awareness device for managing user status, the advertising method comprising:

storing as a primary user's status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser, the symbol being originally provided by the advertiser and capable of reminding a person of items or services of the advertiser as well as the advertiser itself;

accepting from the advertiser a request to use the symbol as the primary user's status designation; and

distributing to a user terminal used by a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status via the network.